MARVELMANIA MONTHLY MAGAZINE

NO. 1

the Adventures of
OSGOOD
and
ZELDA
SOMEWHERE IN THE LATVERIAN ALPS...
WELL, ZELDA--IT TOOK US THREE WEEKS, BUT WE FINALLY LOCATED IT!
YES, OSGOOD--THE LOST TREASURE OF MARVELMANIA POSTERS IS OURS!
PHOTO BY P. PARKER
HEY--WHY'D YOU TAP ME ON MY SHOULDER?
ANYWAY, ZELDA--AREN'T THESE MARVELMANIA POSTERS BEAUTIFUL? THIS BLACK KNIGHT BY HOWARD PURCELL IS JUST GORGEOUS! AND HOW ABOUT THE WAY KIRBY DRAWS DOCTOR DOOM? THAT IS ONE MEAN SUPER-VILLAIN! I'D HATE TO RUN INTO HIM!
I DIDN'T TAP YOU ON THE SHOULDER! YOU TAPPED ME ON MY SHOULDER!
WOULDN'T YOU, ZELDA?
MMMPH!
ORDER TODAY!!
...OR ELSE!!
OH!
DOCTO
HULK

MARVELMANIA MONTHLY MAGAZINE

● April, 1970 — no. 1

Don Wallace, Publisher
Mark Evanier, Editor
Steve Sherman, Asst. Ed.

STAFF

ROBERT SOLOMON
ETHEL HURWICZ ● LINDA WALTERS
JONATHAN YOST ● MIKE ROTBLATT
BRUCE SIMON

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DEDICATED TO:
Chip Goodman
Stan Lee
Jack Kirby
John Buscema
Gene Colan
Jim Steranko
Roy Thomas
Johnny Romita
Herb Trimpe
Marie Severin
Sol Brodsky
Dick Ayers
Don Heck
AND THE REST OF THE GANG AT THE
MARVEL COMICS GROUP

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS should reach us as soon as possible and please include the label from your latest issue. We are not responsible for copies lost due to change of address. Please allow 3-4 weeks if possible.

BACK ISSUES are one dollar each. A few copies of this issue may still be purchased. No copies are available of our October test issue.

PLEASE enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with submissions (of art or articles) which you would like returned or letters that you would like an answer to. PRETTY PLEASE!?

Dept. F P.O.B. 718, Culver City, Calif. 90230

EDITORIAL

I just finished a box of Kentucky Fried Chicken for my lunch, licked my fingers, and decided it was time to write the editorial for this issue--So if this page lapses into a Southern drawl at times, you now know the reason. If I'd had a corned beef sandwich for lunch, I might be lapsing into a Jewish dialect!

With this issue, we begin what I hope will be a long run of monthly publications dedicated to Marveldom. I know of no individual or firm which has ever undertaken so ambitious a project, and if you ever come by the office and see me huddled in a corner over my typewriter, staring at the production schedule and moaning,--Well, now you know the reason for that, as well!

This periodical is going to require quite a bit of work to fill up thirty-two pages a month with quality material. To do it, we need your help!

I said in our test issue last October that this was your magazine...if you don't believe it, let me know and I shall send you our printing bill to pay. No one took us up on that offer and we had to pay the thing ourselves...But quite a few members didn't grasp what I was saying, fully and wrote in asking permission to submit articles or drawings to the magazine. My reply to them was that anything they would send us would be welcomed and considered for publication and that still holds! I could sit here at my desk and write my own column and get a bunch of personal friend contacts I have to do the articles and art for the rest and we'd probably turn out a pretty decent publication...But we wouldn't be fulfilling our main function which is to act as the official organ (Gee Dad It's a Wurlitzer!) of this club! If you have something you'd like to say to the general membership or you have a fact you think they'd be interested in knowing, send it in like John Ostapkovich (And I thought I had a bad last name) or Tim Russell! If you think you're a decent artist and you do a drawing worthy of being exhibited before thousands of your Marvelmania-peers, send it in like Doyal Morgan or Joe Stevens! End of appeal.

We did recieve quite a few submissions since the first issue which I didn't use in this issue. Some had to be rejected on grounds other than lack of quality, but many were left out because they violated two basic rules which I formulated as guidelines for making that all-omnipotent decision I'm faced with of which work gets published and which gets sent back to the creator in his stamped, self-addressed envelope...

1) All of this magazine's readership is comprised of people who are Marvel fans at heart. There therefore is no reason to run articles which say nothing except that Marvel is great or that Stan Lee is a talented editor. Everyone's already in agreement with that or else they wouldn't be reading this magazine! If you do want to do an opinion article, find something to complain about--You're probably in the minority there, and you'll end up enticing the majority to read it!

2) All of this magazine's readership has a basic knowledge of the group and its characters. We received a very well-written article on the origin of Captain America which I had to reject because, frankly, I think everyone out there already knows Cap's origin. The vast majority are probably sick unto death of seeing it in every other issue of Captain America, in fact! If you want to do a factual article, pick a topic which hasn't been as well covered in the comics themselves!

If you think the contents of this issue are good, wait until you see what's coming up next issue! (And then again, if you think the contents of this issue aren't so good, stick around for a while...You may be pleasantly surprised!

To take a brief tour of this issue, "The Adventures of Osgood and Zelda" marks the debut of our contribution to the world of soft-sell advertising. Bruce Simon and Ethel Hurwicz play the title roles, (We'll leave you to decide who is who!) and as for the gent who played Dr. Doom, we could not get Paul Newman, so we got the next best thing! (But what the heck...My eyes are as blue as his, anyday!)

The twentieth page by Tom Palmer is a leftover page from "Melvin and the Monster", a story originally drawn for the back of Silver Surfer, but left homeless when the Watcher strip was dropped. It turned up in a recent Marvel Super-Heroes, but they had to drop four pages which we felt were so beautiful that we ran one here and one on the back of the Inking and Coloring kit.

If all this meets with your approval, I hope you'll drop me a line and let us know. So, if you didn't start reading at the back of the issue, you now have twenty-eight pages to go. Do not collect $200.00, et cetera, et cetera...

— MARK EVANIER

Mark Evanier,
MARVELMANIA's answer to involuntary servitude

Dear Mr. Evanier,

I am very pleased with the new MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL idea. After inspecting the MARVELMANIA Magazine and colorful catalog for hours on end in pure amazement, I'm totally convinced of Marvel's age-old endeavor to upgrade the quality of the comics medium. Taking advantage of this members-operated club I would now like to submit my ideas.

I would like to see Kazar, the Inhumans, the Falcon, the Watcher, Capt. Marvel, Yellowjacket, and Dr. Strange used more heavily in your decals.

I am very appreciative of the fact that you would take the time in your club publication to print an in-depth study of the often overlooked backgrounds which serve to enhance the quality of Marvel's present masterpieces. I hope this continues.

Most of the Marvelmaniacs in my area, including myself failed to purchase the 1969 Fantastic Four Annual which featured photos of the Marvel Bullpen. We would all be very grateful if you could find the space in your publication for some photos.

--Richard Long
2178 Willamont Ave.
Columbus, Ohio 43219

[First off, "Mr. Evanier" is my father's name. My name is Mark. As for photos of the Marvel staff, you'll find some in this issue with more on the way. How's that for service?]

Dear Marvelmania,

We want to take this special opportunity to thank you for the part you played in the success of the gala Santa Claus Lane Parade of Stars on Thanksgiving Eve, 1969.

The wide variety and types of entries in the feature division contributed greatly to the audience interests and delights. The fact that they were pleased with the parade is without question when you consider that nearly half of a million people shouted and screamed their hearts out the whole evening.

To be acclaimed as one of three great Christmas parades in America is only possible because so many people...like you, have contributed so much to its success. We are deeply grateful to you.

--Claire T. Grimes
Executive Vice-President,
Hollywood Chamber of Commerce

Dear Mark,

I'd like to thank the whole gang for all the things you have done. I dig this MARVELMANIA kit and all my friends like it, also. I am going to send for the Spider-Man pin-up as soon as I can. This has got to be the greatest club in the whole world!

--Fred Vest
7107 Ethan Allen Way
Valley Station, Ky. 40272

[Thanks, Fred! We think you're kind of groovy, yourself!]

Dear Mark,

What you are doing in MARVELMANIA Magazine is, I think, what comic fandom has waited for for years. I hope you'll use this vehicle to answer a lot of the questions we fans have always had about how the comics are produced. I have never seen anything about how the lettering of a comic is done and since it is such an important part of any comic, I would like to hear something about it.

--Sid Dunhill
Left his address
Off his letter

[You're not the only one to pose that question, so we shot the query in the direction of ace letterer Sam Rosen who responded with the following...]

Dear Fans,

The pens I use are either B-6 or A-5 speedballs, but are modified by guiding down and shaping on carborundum stone. Guide-lines are about 3/16 of an inch apart, separated about 1/16 from one another. For heavy lettering, I use A-6 or B-5, once again ground down until it feels right to me. As for the ink, I generally use Higgins black.

--Sam Rosen

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mark,

I have a few suggestions to make regarding the things available from MARVELMANIA...

I have noticed that about 65% of all your items are designed and/or drawn by Jack Kirby. Kirby is a good artist but I'd like to see more of a variety of artists drawing items. For instance, Jack Kirby did the Silver Surfer poster, whereas John Buscema should have, because he draws Silver Surfer monthly.

On your decal sheets, show more variety of heroes and of villains. Don't overdo Spidey, Subby, Thor, and Captain America. Maybe, even have entire sheets devoted to some super villain decals.

Also, please do more of a variety of posters. Some suggestions: Avengers, X-Men, Dr. Strange, Daredevil, Iron Man, Sub-Mariner, Quicksilver, and others. In general, give more of a variety.

Now, in closing, I wish to say that MI is really great! Keep up the fantastic fabulous super great work!

--J. Douglas Dennis
1555 Marylestone
Union Lake, Mich. 48085

[We get so many letters asking us to keep up the good work that we sometimes wonder if we don't have a "hate mail" post office box somewhere which we have forgotten about! One of the few subjects on which any mail is uncomplimentary is why

we chose Kirby to do the Surfer poster instead of Buscema. There are a few John Buscema fans out there who are wildly indignant over this matter and have asked that we justify our decision.

Our feeling was that since Jack Kirby designed the Surfer originally and also does the best rendition of Galactus, he

was the one for this assignment. This is not to slight John Buscema in any way--He is unquestionably one of the best and most skilled craftsmen in comics today and we hope he'll be represented in our poster line in the near-future. Life was so much easier when we had only to buy the Surfer and not make life and death decisions about him!]

Dear Mark,

I have some ideas for your new club. First, how about making a paperback book about all your super-heroes? Another idea I have is for some Marvel book covers. You could have some of your favorite heroes on each cover and there could be a couple of different cover designs. I'm sure they would sell like hotcakes!

Well, that's about it. I am glad to tell you I liked your membership kit very much. But can you please tell me how I will know when you put out a new catalog? Well, I think your club will be a big success! Keep up the good work!

--Richard Lee
224 Old Bergen Rd.
Jersey, N.J. 07305

[You've got some good ideas there, Richard--Permit me to enumerate...

A paperback book is currently out of our jurisdiction but I must admit that I'd like to see more of them.

Marvel book-covers is an inspired suggestion which some fifty members all came up with at one time. We'll probably do some soon, but I hope they don't sell like hotcakes! I'd hate to think people were buying them, putting syrup on 'em and eating them! (I know that isn't funny, but then neither are Mort Weisinger's jokes!)

As for when the next catalog will be out, if I tell you that here, I'll have an empty spot in the club news section, so I refer you there!]

Dear Mania-Causer,

I am writing to you about two things; one good and one bad...

First, the good news! You guys know how to make great posters. The Silver Surfer I got is ten times as good as the one in the catalog!

Now, the bad news! I think you're crazy to charge more than three times the cost of a Marvel mag for your monthly magazine. You should be able to give us Marvelites a better deal than that!

So, until Galactus joins the Mouseketeers, 'Nuff Said!

--Mark Bernstein
16364 Harden Circle
Southfield, Mich. 48075

[If it were up to me, I'd give this magazine away...But printers have a strong union and they insist upon getting paid. On the first five thousand questionnaires, we asked what the members thought was a fair price for a sixteen-page magazine. The prices given ranged upwards of four dollars an issue (I think that was my questionnaire!) with the average a strong 35¢ an issue. We felt no one would mind us charging 50¢ an ish for twice as much magazine. This publication is very expensive to put together.]

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mark,

I was very pleased with the kit I got today, however I was disappointed with your choice of covers for the poster. I think it was one of Kirby's worst Captain America covers.

The large mailing tube was appreciated. It allowed you to get the poster unrolled. The post paid envelopes were also a good deal. The price for posters is very reasonable and paper stock, excellent.

If I understand this Mad Money correctly, then it is ridiculous. I assume the idea behind it is to give the members some sort of an incentive to order often. This is all right, but if a 42¢ coupon is refunded with each order, regardless of size, then you are encouraging the buyer to place a number of small orders. With that way, he receives a larger discount. Also, it costs you more. You should encourage the buyer to make more, larger orders because it costs less for postage that way.

--Mike McKinney
4025 SW Hillside Dr.
Corvallis, Ore. 97330

[The Mad Money was originally intended as a good-will gesture on our part. It has become a source of constant anger and frustration because try though we may to explain it to the membership, we always find that half of the MARVELMANIACs out there haven't got the foggiest notion of what they're supposed to do with it! This isn't your fault, Mike---It's ours for not explaining it in clear enough terms. You get 1 piece for *each item* you order out of the catalog. How many orders you send us does not matter--how many items you buy does! A complete explanation on our mystifying moola may be found in our club news column. As for the poster, I personally concur with your feelings. I don't think it's bad, but I can name several dozen I'd rather have covering the crack on my wall. The men who made the choice were pressed for time and all they can say is that it seemed like a good one at the time!]

Dear Mark,

First off, I would like to say I really enjoyed the magazine. I especially liked two articles: "The Coming of the Avengers" by Tony Isabella was my favorite article and when he's finished, I hope he'll go onto other Marvel comic books. I also liked the one on Jack Kirby. This also, I hope, will not be a "one-shot" thing. If it isn't, I would like to see an article on George Klein. He was a favorite of mine and I'm sure he was that of many other people.

--Dennis Eggink
1010 W. 2nd St.
Ripon, Calif. 95366

[We had wanted to do some sort of tribute to George Klein in our trial issue, but when the deadline came, we were still arguing over what would be the proper way to present it. As an admirer of the gentleman's work, I can only say that I'll miss him. He was the first of John Buscema's inkers to bring out all that Buscema put into the pencils and I think we underestimate the work of inkers in that respect. At D.C. and at A.C.G., as well as at many other comapnies, he exhibited a very great knowledge of dark and light space and a talent for making a penciler' s work live!! It is unfortunate that he resumed inking for the Marvel group as late as he did as his later work there really is his finest and from the looks of it, he really was enjoying it. The fans can tell when an artist is just working to get a story out of the way and on to the next paycheck and Klein never fell into that category.

Talented writers and artists never really pass from the scene, though--they create something which lives on forever.]

Dear Mark,

I only recently received my MARVELMANIA kit and with it your MARVELMANIA Magazine.

You invited comment and enthusiasm...I have both. Ish #1 had three things going for it: the Kirby and Steranko covers and the spotlight on Jack Kirby. I hope you will continue to have pro covers and interviews.

--Blair Hemstock
258 Westwood Dr.
Oakville, Ontario
Canada

[My apologies, Blair, for only printing this much of your rather lengthy and helpful letter, but you bring up a point worth discussing...

We will continue to have pro interviews. (Got a doozie with Steranko comin' up!) But if we could get some good art from the members, I'd just as soon run that more. This is a club magazine and, in that aspect, it's *your* magazine. The Kirby and Steranko covers from the first issue were terrific, but I think the material within was more important. I hope nobody's buying this publication just for Kirby and Steranko covers, because if they are then there are other places to get them, namely on *F.F.*, *Thor* and a bunch of paperbacks listed in the Marvel News section in this issue. Got that down, all you Kirby and Steranko fan clubbers?]

Dear Mark,

Please accept my compliments on the new MARVELMANIA club and what you guys are doing with it! I have long had a tremendous hatred for people who tried to make a fast buck off the Marvel heroes with items which really didn't relate to the heroes; just used their names to sell their pro-

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

duct, thus lowering the very dignity of the characters. I am glad to note that not only is there nothing of this sort in your catalog, but you also are planning this project as a long-range one. For once this type of merchandising is being handled by people who actually know and understand the Marvel style of super-hero!

So, until Thor joins a God of Thunders union, Make Mine Marvel(mania)!

--James Lee
Left his address
off his letter

[Inasmuch as the above letter came without a return address and we always like to include those things, I ran to our files to look up his address only to discover we have three members named "James Lee". We may never know which one wrote the above letter.

I share your sentiments on super-hero merchandising. We received one card from a member who thought that our posters fell into the category of juvenile superhero commercialization. As long as we have any say in the matter, you'll never see any Captain America bubble bath or Hulk lima beans from this club!

If Thor joined a labor organization, it would have to be the "So be it Union"! (If I didn't have a deadline on this magazine, I'd take the time to think of something funny!]

Dear Mark,

Having just read Avengers #74, I can't decide whether I loved or hated it. The political philosophy presented was downright fanatical. Yes, I've always been one to say that I wanted political issues discussed in comics and thusly I was pleased to a vast extent with the story. But I wonder if a story that so drastically portrays a small, ignorant minority as a large and powerful ignorant majority can be harmful to impressionable children who read it. The story seems to be giving the impression that the U.S.A. consists mostly of right-wing racists who go around calling everybody a Communist at the drop of a red hat! Similarly, the magazine would almost have us believe that all the Negroes in this country are militants ready to clobber the nearest white anytime the wind blows. This is ridiculous! America is still the greatest place to live, this side of the Apollo-11 TV camera. This country is not filled with a bunch of extremists as the two Serpents were portrayed.

Still, even with all that, I still liked the story. (You should see what I do with one I don't like!) Though the courage shown in bringing up the issue was dimmed by its handling, I have to give Marvel an "A" for effort.

Anyway, it was good to see John Buscema back!

--Robert Solomon
9702 Beverlywood St.
Los Angeles, Ca. 90035

[Thanks for your letter, Rob--I wanted to have at least one which dealt with Marvel comics since I'd like to devote some of each letter column to such comments! Any rebuttals?]

SEND YOUR LETTERS, COMMENTS, REBUTTALS, SUGGESTIONS, OPINIONS, DIRTY LAUNDRY AND ANYTHING ELSE WHICH MIGHT HELP FILL UP THIS COLUMN TO:

MARVELMANIA Magazine
Dept. F
P.O.B. #718
Culver City, Ca. 90230

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Wow, I just remembered---a couple of months ago, I promised to clue you in about the length of time it takes us to write, letter, and draw one of our ebullient little epics. It isn't that we forgot (perish forbid!), but we sorta got all side-tracked. Anyway, better late than never (a catchy little phrase I just made up!) so here goes--and pay attention, pal--there may be an exam! It takes about half a day to create the plot for an average 20-pager. That includes an hour or two spent in discussing the various story angles by the writer and penciller. Then, the penciller begins to draw the strip, and most pencillers average about two pages a day of peerless drawing. Of course there are speed demons like Kirby, Colan, and Buscema who can whip out three pages daily --while others (who shall be mercifully unnamed) blaze on doing a single page each day. You might also bear in mind that many artists (and writers as well) work different hours. Some burn the midnight oil until the wee hours of dawn, and others put in a typical businessman's eight-hour-day. Finally, the writer gets the pencilled pages and usually spends about two full working days putting the dialogue and captions into a 20-pager. (Averaging 10 pages daily). Then, the letterers can do about a page an hour, while the inkers --who are the last to tackle a page of artwork, take about as long as the average penciller per page. Now then, if there are any questions from the gallery--forget it!! I'm exhausted from just thinking about all that work!

Stan Lee

MARVELMANIA CLUB NEWS

Much has been happening at MARVELMANIA since we last met. For instance...

Just about everyone seems to want to know when our next poster line will be out and what posters will be in it. Right now, it's too early to say anything for sure. We're wondering if, considering the way you maniacs snatched up the first eight, if any of you have any wall-space left for more posters. Anyway, we've yet to make any definite decisions about the next group. We'll probably throw some of our ideas and yours from the questionnaires out for discussion in the mag, first.

Also, you might watch this space for details on our first MARVELMANIA award ceremony to be held shortly. Just as the movies have their Oscar awards and the television industry has its Emmies, we feel that we should make some presentation each year in categories such as: "Best Writer", "Best Penciller", "Best Cover of the Year", "Best New Character", etc. Next month, we hope to make some sort of announcement about how interested members can get on the nominating committee for the Marvie awards! (Don't worry--that title isn't final...Just a working name for the awards until one of you aficianados comes up with something better!)

We've probably received in excess of a hundred letters from members asking us why Dr. Strange or Nick Fury or X-Men were discontinued and if there isn't something we can do to bring them back. The answer to the second part of this is "No, for now!" and here is our answer to the first question--

Since Marvel became such a phenomenal success, a great deal of pressure has been put on the Bullpen to produce more magazines. Goodness knows, there are a dozen characters floating around in the Negative Zone alone who deserve a comic of their own. But Stan and the gang just don't have the time, and when a comic slips slightly in sales like Nick Fury did, the only thing they can do is assume that there are better things to do with their time.

Several of you more observant members have written in to ask why our Spider-Man and Hulk posters look as if they were designed by Jack Kirby. The answer to that question might have something to do with the fact that our Spider-Man and Hulk posters were designed by Jack Kirby! You might as well know the whole story...Originally, we had planned to have Kirby do the art on those two posters and he went ahead and did the finished art on those posters. A while later though, after numerous conferences with the New York Bullpen, it was decided that it would be more appropriate if Herb Trimpe and John Romita did the art on those two posters, as they are the ones who currently handle Hulk and Spidey, and it is their rendition of those two characters to which most of Marveldom is accustomed. Although some of us prefer Kirby's version of the Hulk, for example, it is a version in which the Green Giblet has not been depicted for many years. It just seemed more logical that our first Hulk poster should be rendered in the contemporary style! Much the same situation was true with Spidey, as well. The Romita and Trimpe versions were then based upon Kirby's drawings. Matter of fact, the machine which Kirby drew the Leader in was not only redrawn by Trimpe, but later incorporated into the strip itself as the "Murder Module". All clear?

A great many members have put to us the question of when our next catalog will be ready and how will they know when to send for it. The answer, although not a very good one, is that we just don't know! We have only begun planning it at the present time, so it will be quite a while...And we have a stockroom which is presently over-flowing with posters, art kits, plastic pillows, and the like, so we won't be putting any new items out for a month or two. But we can tell you this--When our next catalog is ready, you'll know about it!

CLUB NEWS (continued)

Matter of fact, you won't be able to keep from hearing all about it! It'll be announced in the Bullpen Bulletins, in this magazine, and we may even send Honest Irv Forbush out to wander the streets with a bell in one hand!

There will now be a short pause in this report as we now bring you an official notice:

OFFICIAL NOTICE!

Effective immediately, we are slightly altering the contents of the mighty membership kit. Ever since we began to be inundated with orders for it, we have become aware that there were a few changes we could make in it, so that it would serve as more of an introduction to the club, so... Henceforth, the contents of the membership kit is as follows...

ONE FULL-COLOR POSTER
ONE FULL-COLOR DECAL SHEET
A COPY OF OUR CATALOG
A COPY OF THE CLUB MAG
A FULL-COLOR MEMBERSHIP CARD
A PIECE OF MAD MONEY

Among the factors which led us to making this decision was the fact that we have run out of "Cap Goes Wild!" posters for the time being and our printers are having a busy enough time of it as it is, just producing enough of our eight catalog posters, without adding to their load. Besides, we felt that that poster was not really exemplary of what the club is capable of producing. So--We've substituted one of our catalog posters (chosen at random) in each kit. This, of course, won't affect you members since you already have your kits, but spread the word around, if you will, because it will be a few months before the ad in the comics can be changed!

You've probably all seen a new syndicated game show called "Can You Top This?", in which comedians try to get higher scores on an applause meter than jokes submitted by home viewers do. Recently, we noticed that a lot of our mail was getting funnier...We were under the impression that members were sending us jokes for some reason until we realized that the address to submit jokes for "Can You Top This?" is the post office box right above ours and incareful sorting was sending much of their mail into our box. It was a shock and a disappointment to discover that all those funny letters weren't meant for us--Just imagine what would happen if one of our green order envelopes on the air! (And we certainly hope it doesn't get over a ninety rating on the laugh-meter!

Speaking of mail, we'd like to take a minute to discuss sending money through the mail. Most mail order companies insist upon check or money order because so many people don't know the proper way to send cash through the mail and it's constantly getting stolen or lost. We're beginning to see the reasons, but rather than forbid you to send cash, we'd like to give you all some pointers and see if that does some good...First, send paper money well wrapped...Don't you worry--We'll find it! One of the guys who opens our mail can smell a dollar bill anywhere within a ten block radius! Wrap the paper money up and if you must send coins, try to get the largest denominations...We've had people sending us nickels and pennys to equal the twenty-five cents postage fee on items. Wrap the coins well in paper or cardboard--It should not be obvious from the outside that your letter contains money! Of course, checks and money orders are still the safest, but please make sure they are completely filled out and made payable to MARVELMANIA. With these few precautions, you are making your order a lot easier to process!

BACK ISSUE TRADING POST

Like the sign says, this is our Trading Corner and it's one of those new features that was prompted by your suggestions! In future issues, this section will be filled with the names and addresses of our club members who wish to trade for the Marvel masterpieces they might have missed or who have extra copies available to other members.

If you have a list which you would like to run in this department, send it along with your name and address to:

MARVELMANIA--Dept. T
The usual address

State clearly whether the Marvels you are listing are wanted or being offered for trade. You may also use this space to announce that you've got a printed list available to interested members in exchange for a stamped, self-addressed envelope. This is a service for members only! No dealers may use this space and we reserve the right to edit any listing.

Each month, the listings to be printed will be picked at random from all those received since the last issue went to press, and all others will be discarded. So get 'em in, fanatics!

Correspondence Corner

Mark Bernstein
16364 Harden Circle
Southfield, Michigan 48075

Dave Cooper
3828 Walton Ave.
Fort Worth, Texas 76133
*Avenger fan

Drew MacDonald
Rt. 1 Box 197
Eveleth, Minn. 55734
*Hulk fan

Constantine Papas
164 Lakeside Dr.
Corte Madera, Calif. 94925
*HAM Radio fans

Ed von Dohlen
2805 Blaker Rd.
Ceres, Calif. 95307
*Avenger's advocate

Irving Forbush
317 Rainbow Bridge
Latveria, New York 31416
*Okay, who's the wise guy?

Bruce Kristalyn
17 Bellevue St. S.W.
Wyoming, Mich. 49508

Stuart "Colt" Mills
Men's Residence Hall--Rm. 436
Kansas State Teachers College
Emporia, Kansas 66801

Rick Rodrigues
859 Hacienda Way
San Rafeal, Calif. 94903

Dan Unger
415 N. Bridge St.
Cannon Falls, Minn. 55009
*Fantastic Four fan

Jon Kawamoto
18542 East South Ave.
Reedley, Calif. 93654
*Captain America fan

Douglas Smith
R.D. #1
Adamsville, Pa. 16110
*Thor fan

WE RAN A LITTLE SHORT ON ROOM THIS ISSUE, BUT WE'LL HAVE A LOT MORE ROOM NEXT ISSUE FOR MORE NAMES OF MEMBERS LOOKING FOR PEN-PALS. YOUR NAME WILL BE AMONG THEM IF YOU'LL WRITE IT AND YOUR ADDRESS ON A POST CARD, ALONG WITH YOUR SPECIAL INTEREST, IF ANY, AND SEND IT TO: Marvelmania--Dept. C

MARVEL NEWS

Possibly the biggest newsstory in Marvel history is the recent resignation of Jack the King Kirby from the Marvel Comics Group. Just as we were going to press with this issue the news broke that Kirby had accepted a job as an editor of three, brand-new titles from a certain Devilish Competitor.

We're certain you members would like to know the reasons for Kirby's resignation and we wish we could tell you something more concrete, but the fact is that it is strictly a personal matter and it probably wouldn't mean much to anyone who doesn't know Kirby, personally. Suffice it to say for now that it had to do with wanting to try something new and the fact that Kirby, who is now situated on the West Coast, is some three thousand miles from the Bullpen and it caused difficulties in producing the comics he was doing for Marvel. To start a new strip like the forthcoming Inhumans strip, it was necessary for Kirby to handle the script himself...And even then there were problems.

Marvel addicts should not be completely dismayed at the departure of Jack Kirby, however. Before he left, he did the pencils up through Fantastic Four #102. Also, when Marvel brings out its two new books, Astonishing Tales and Amazing Adventures, each of which features two strips, the first four Inhumans stories were done by Kirby, as were two Ka-Zar stories. (Just for the record, the other two strips are Dr. Doom and the Black Widow.)

Moreover, Kirby also did the pencils on one issue of Silver Surfer, which guest-stars the Inhumans in a trade deal which sent John Buscema to do one issue of Thor.

As for who will take over on those strips, Buscema will continue to do the Asgardian Wonder, while Johnny Romita takes over the pencils on the Fantastic Four in a few issues from now. Since Romita will be busy with the F.F., Spider-Man will be illustrated by Gil Kane, himself! So far, there is no word on who will draw up the Inhumans strip, but we should have word for you, next issue!

Those of you who purchased the posters which Kirby drew for MARVELMANIA should be advised that you have purchased what may soon prove to be a real collector's item.

MORE INFORMATION ON KIRBY'S RESIGNATION MAY BE HAD IN OUR NEXT ISSUE! MORE MARVEL NEWS MAY BE HAD BY TURNING TO PAGE 31! WE KNOW THIS KIRBY STORY DOESN'T REALLY BELONG IN THE CLUB'S NEWS SECTION, BUT WHEN THE STORY BROKE, IT WAS THE ONLY PART OF THE ISSUE THAT HADN'T ALREADY GONE TO THE PRINTER!

MEET THE MARVELMANIA MADMEN

Every day's mail brings us a few letters from members who desire to learn more about the staff which makes up the nutty world of MARVELMANIA. As long as none of these requests come from the Internal Revenue, we are glad to comply.

The subject of this first in-depth biography is our own DON WALLACE, the Leader-of-the Bunch, himself! It is his job to coordinate the activities--nutty though they may be---and to watch over the functions of this crazy club.

It was a hot evening in Cleveland, Ohio that night of July 27, 1940. Over at the Wallace household, things were getting hotter. Twin boys had been born--both Leos and both roaring like lions. The first to scream for an air conditioner was Don, his brother Ron being content to let Don do all the screaming. Four years later, the first air conditioner was introduced to the public, but by that time the Wallaces had left Cleveland.

The second year after that hot night they had moved on to Talahassee, Florida and two years after that to St. Louis, Missouri...finally ffinding a place of permanent residence by the Pacific in Los Angeles. Like any child growing up in Hollywood, it was inevitable that Don should soon find himself on Art Linkletter's House Party, being asked what he was going to be when he grew up. Don said he wanted to be a Marine, and--sure enough--eight years later, he was!

Half of Wallace's three year hitch was spent touring the Pacific on assignment as a body guard to an Admiral. The other half was spent at Camp Pendleton in California where he taught judo.

Came discharge time and it was back to school-time! Don worked during the day as manufacturer's representative in a clothing business and, at evening classes, earned himself a three-year degree. He headed now for Law School, where his entrance exam placed him third out of over three hundred applicants. While in Law School he decided to enrich his knowledge of law by seeing it being put to work, and he entered the Los Angeles Sheriff Office, leaving the clothing biz behind forever. In this capacity, Don worked the Juveniles division, Vice Squad, and Recruiting. Oddly enough, Don's biggest acheivment in the law and order field came after he was through with Law School and had left the Sheriffs Department...

One evening, Don was driving home when a car swerved past him on the left, going well over both the speed limit and the double yellow line. The maniacal driver careened his car off Wallace's and also knocked a car coming in the other diretcion causing the driver, an old lady, to smash through the front window of a candy store. As the man took off down the street, Don took off after him in hot pursuit of this hit-and-run driver.

Chasing the man through the streets of Los Angeles and many of its red lights, Don soon heard police sirens behind him and when he looked ahead, discovered that the man he'd been chasing had lost his control and driven up onto the curb, into the front door of a nearby house.

Don began to pursue him on foot, but gave up and returned to his car to find dozens of policemen who filled him in on what was going on...

Not only was the culprit a hit-and-run driver, but on the floor of his wrecked car was a small girl he had kidnapped from a shopping center. The area was, by now, swarming all over with police searching for the kidnapper. Not willing to give up the chase that easily, Don circled around the area in his car until he found a likely alley. Leaving his car, he crept through the alley until he came face-to-face with... You guessed it!--the kidnapper himself! A hand-to-hand battle ensued and when the police came upon them, they had to take the kidnapper away in an ambulance. Don was still in one piece, but not shaken up enough to prevent him from answering questions from reporters and having his picture all over the next day's newspaper. And some people wonder how he got involved with a super-hero fan club!

CONTINUED...

Marvelmania Madmen (continued)

Shortly after all this, he decided to go into business for himself. He formed a company which manufactures plastic advertising specialties, another which produced three-dimensional photographs and, a few years later...(A fanfare, maestro--!) MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL!!!

Don is married to a lovely Swedish girl by the name of Jana and they are the proud parents of a nine-month girl named Desireé. Don's twin Ron is a teacher in the Los Angeles City School System, a member of a special advisory committee set up to create new teaching methods and, on the weekends, he puts on the make-up of Happy Snappy the clown, who has sung and done magic at over two thousand children's parties. Their older sister, Jerrie, is a child psychologist.

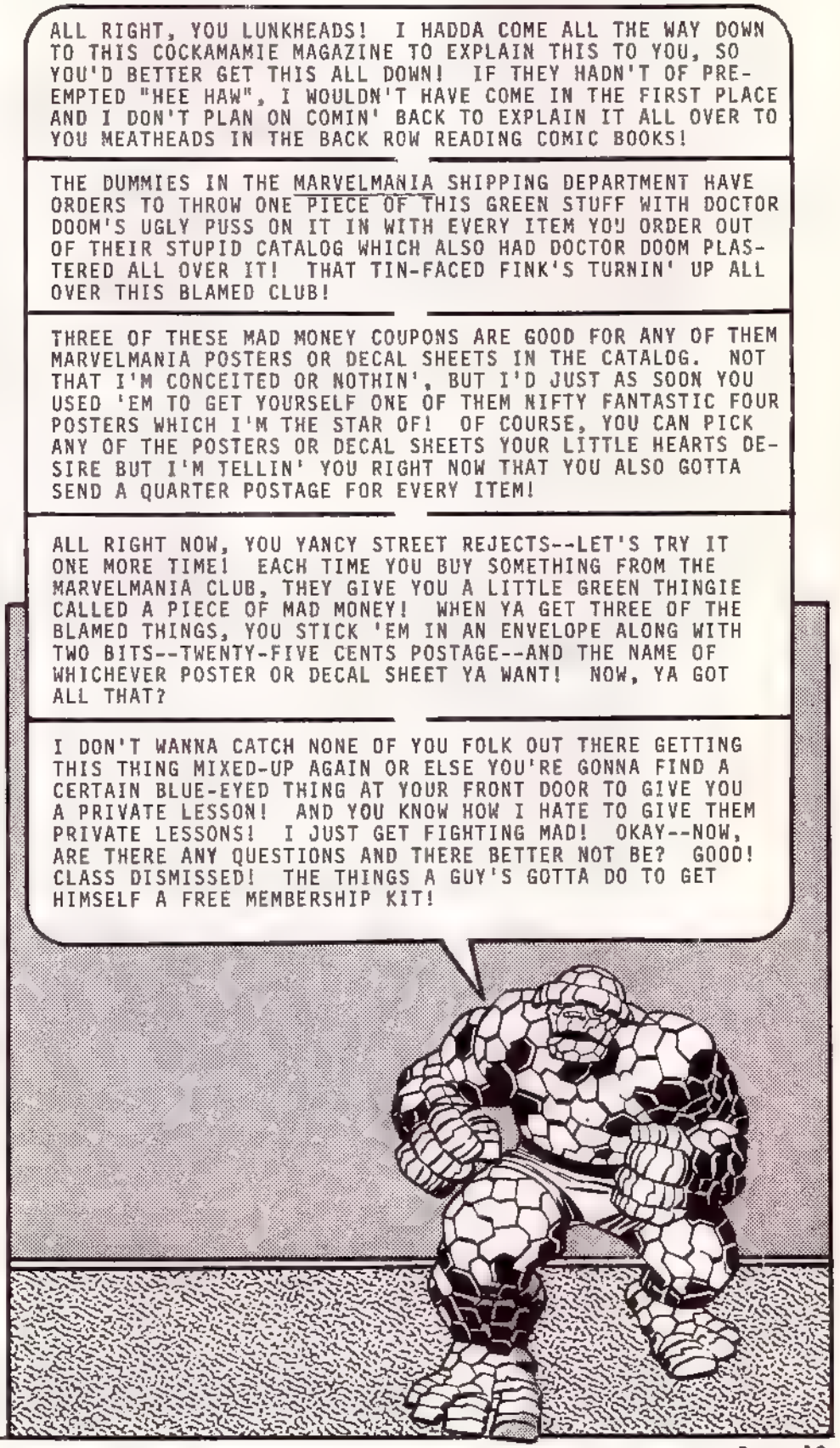
The interests of Don Wallace are many and varied...He likes animals--especially big dogs such as Great Danes and Dobermans, photography and Roman and Greek history intrigue him, and he enjoys science-fiction, being a devout "Star Trek" addict. Of special interest to Don is the field of Extra-Sensory Perception. The E.S.P.-research department at U.C.L.A. has been after him for years to submit to tests, having heard remarkable accounts of how Don has gone up to total strangers and told them their birthdates, relatives' names, and he once told a man he had never met before of a scar on the stranger's leg. (which he had!) Possibly the most remarkable feat of all was when he predicted to the day when daughter Desiree would be born. (The doctors were four weeks off!) Although he is interested in the science and most friends are sure he has E.S.P. Don doesn't think there's any sort of divine privilege about it. "It's something that's inside all of us," he says, "...it just has to be developed"!

As "Leader-of-the-Bunch", Don is the mastermind behind MARVELMANIA. It's very difficult to argue with a guy who was a judo instructor and can tell what you're thinking!

As there have been many queries posed to us about how our

MAD MONEY

is supposed to work, we have invited an esteemed guest here to explain it to the general membership. We are proud to be able to introduce Mr. Benjamin J. Grimm...


ALL RIGHT, YOU LUNKHEADS! I HADDA COME ALL THE WAY DOWN TO THIS COCKAMAMIE MAGAZINE TO EXPLAIN THIS TO YOU, SO YOU'D BETTER GET THIS ALL DOWN! IF THEY HADN'T OF PRE-EMPTED "HEE HAW", I WOULDN'T HAVE COME IN THE FIRST PLACE AND I DON'T PLAN ON COMIN' BACK TO EXPLAIN IT ALL OVER TO YOU MEATHEADS IN THE BACK ROW READING COMIC BOOKS!
THE DUMMIES IN THE MARVELMANIA SHIPPING DEPARTMENT HAVE ORDERS TO THROW ONE PIECE OF THIS GREEN STUFF WITH DOCTOR DOOM'S UGLY PUSS ON IT IN WITH EVERY ITEM YOU ORDER OUT OF THEIR STUPID CATALOG WHICH ALSO HAD DOCTOR DOOM PLASTERED ALL OVER IT! THAT TIN-FACED FINK'S TURNIN' UP ALL OVER THIS BLAMED CLUB!
THREE OF THESE MAD MONEY COUPONS ARE GOOD FOR ANY OF THEM MARVELMANIA POSTERS OR DECAL SHEETS IN THE CATALOG. NOT THAT I'M CONCEITED OR NOTHIN', BUT I'D JUST AS SOON YOU USED 'EM TO GET YOURSELF ONE OF THEM NIFTY FANTASTIC FOUR POSTERS WHICH I'M THE STAR OF! OF COURSE, YOU CAN PICK ANY OF THE POSTERS OR DECAL SHEETS YOUR LITTLE HEARTS DESIRE BUT I'M TELLIN' YOU RIGHT NOW THAT YOU ALSO GOTTA SEND A QUARTER POSTAGE FOR EVERY ITEM!
ALL RIGHT NOW, YOU YANCY STREET REJECTS--LET'S TRY IT ONE MORE TIME! EACH TIME YOU BUY SOMETHING FROM THE MARVELMANIA CLUB, THEY GIVE YOU A LITTLE GREEN THINGIE CALLED A PIECE OF MAD MONEY! WHEN YA GET THREE OF THE BLAMED THINGS, YOU STICK 'EM IN AN ENVELOPE ALONG WITH TWO BITS--TWENTY-FIVE CENTS POSTAGE--AND THE NAME OF WHICHEVER POSTER OR DECAL SHEET YA WANT! NOW, YA GOT ALL THAT?
I DON'T WANNA CATCH NONE OF YOU FOLK OUT THERE GETTING THIS THING MIXED-UP AGAIN OR ELSE YOU'RE GONNA FIND A CERTAIN BLUE-EYED THING AT YOUR FRONT DOOR TO GIVE YOU A PRIVATE LESSON! AND YOU KNOW HOW I HATE TO GIVE THEM PRIVATE LESSONS! I JUST GET FIGHTING MAD! OKAY--NOW, ARE THERE ANY QUESTIONS AND THERE BETTER NOT BE? GOOD! CLASS DISMISSED! THE THINGS A GUY'S GOTTA DO TO GET HIMSELF A FREE MEMBERSHIP KIT!

TOYS FOR TOTS

REPORT

It had begun as something of a casual remark and grown a piece at a time into what may well be the greatest acheivment ever made by a society of comic book addicts. Leader-of the-Bunch that he be, Don Wallace had been in a conference with a group of the local membership of MARVELMANIA---among them, Mark Evanier. The topic was...What can this club do in the way of a worthy cause. Is there something we can work on outside of the appreciation of Marvel comics? Dozens of ideas were brought up and left to dangle...good, but not good enough...interesting...but it's just not inspiring....one idea after another missed.

This was all back in August of 1969...which seems like so very short a time to those not directly involved in whay happened. They were discussing the old Merry Marvel Marching Society---Just what it did and did not do and a casual point in the latter class was that the MMMS never "marched" anywhere. How about, Mark suggested, a procession of comic book characters and readers in the Santa Claus Lane Parade? It clicked. The idea sounded good--it was just wacky enough and they set about to decide how to go about it...

First--a call to the parade officials..they liked the idea and even though the parade was already overcrowded, they said they'd make room for us. The theme, after all, was "Children's Storybooks"...and so the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce which stages the parade had to admit that comics are quite an important aspect of that theme if not the major contemporary manifestation! Don set the old wheels into motion...it would be necessary to have costumes designed of some Marvel characters for the parade and just the right men would have to be chosen to fill them. A dozen ideas were hurtled back and forth about what our procession should include...then an idea came up which dwarfed the parade idea and sent a newer burst of enthusiasm throughout the office. Evanier pointed out that one of the traditions of the parade is the Marine Corps Reserves "TOYS FOR TOTS" train. The campaign collects toys for needy children which is most certainly as worthy a cause as you are apt to find. Why couldn't Captain America, Thor, Spider-Man, and the club itself give the Marines a hand this year? Don liked the idea and proceeded to expand upon it and pretty soon everyone could be seen tossing ideas around. We had a hundred new collection methods. Some very sane but most of them just the wildest crop of notions ever to be made by a club of superhero fans. Would the Marines welcome our help? The entire group was waiting tensely some days later as Don went to meet for a lunch with a few of the gentlemen in charge of the TFT campaign. Don, an ex-Marine himself, volunteered his time to coordinate much of the publicity around the local campaign and they discussed the way super-heroes appeal to all ages and how well they tie in with work such as this...

So when Donald returned to the office chanting "From the Halls of Montezuma", we knew we were in and we knew that a great deal of work lay ahead. (The preceding understatement was brought to you as a public service!)

First on the duty list was the poster...a "TOYS FOR TOTS" poster showing Captain America saying: "Be a Super-Hero! Give TOYS FOR TOTS!" was thought of by half a dozen people simultaneously and Jack Kirby volunteered to materialize it. Local printers were willing to help and soon thousands of the full-color posters were on the way around the nation. There were costumes to be made and someone had to explain to the costumer just how Spidey's web lines went around him and what Thor's hammer was made of. It called for dozens of drawings clipped from comics and annotated. There were also the old problems that comic book costumes were not designed practically. Thor's cape seems to be fine in the comics, but the way it carries would require special wires to be simulated. Then too, the costumes do tend to vary between artists and even between panels at times. A standard design for Spidey's costume had to be designated and sufficient drawings found with the web lines and other variables in exact uniformity. And once the drawings were all selected, much remained to be done on the part of the costume makers.

Meanwhile, back at the proverbial ranch, the MARVELMANIA crew set about to arrange for necessities of the campaign

CONTINUED...

TOYS FOR TOTS (continued)

and with the tremendous amount of donations coming into the program, it should have come as no surprise when Don came out and announced that he had secured the Pan-Pacific Auditorium for two days prior to Christmas. What, we all wondered, should we do with it?

Now, the Pan-Pacific Auditorium is one of the largest halls in Southern California and home of the Boat Show, the Auto Show, the post office when they have Christmas mail to sort, and a flurry of ice skating troupes. A meeting hall that large must certainly be able to help out the TOYS FOR TOTS campaign...what to do with it? Someone suggested we fill the place with grape jello, but that was decided against for obvious reasons. (It would have clashed with the rug!) Someone else suggested a big touch football game, but that wouldn't really have helped the TOYS FOR TOTS campaign much. Some radical went so far as to suggest that we hold a TOYS FOR TOTS rally there in which we have stars and games and exhibits for which the admission is one new unwrapped toy for a donation to the campaign! The nerve of that guy, we all thought, and then proceeded to prepare just such a rally. The date set was the weekend of December 6--7, 1969, and Don set about to arrange it.

But in the midst of all the running around, the costumes were completed and as Bert Lu, trusted associate, went to get them, a wave of skepticism ran throughout the office. It was impossible, the cynic element persisted, to do an accurate job. We prepared ourselves for the worst, hoping--somehow--to be delightfully surprised.

As it turned out, we were and we weren't. The Captain America costume was almost a shock because it was one of the ones worn in the 1944 movie serial of the Star-Spangled Avenger. A few minor changes were required and the shield still had to be built...but we were delighted that someone at the costumers had remembered that the Cap'n had been tucked away, mothballs in mask, in a foreboding corner of the storage floor. Dr. Doom's costume was brought in next. Believed to be the toughest, it was the finest of all. A suit of armor had been used as the basis--over which was placed a green toga and hood with a cape that hooked around the neck with a chain with large, golden discs on it which approximated most satisfactorily the Jack Kirby-version of the costume decided on as our standard. The mask still had to be made, but we were all quite pleased. Not so with Spidey, though...the costume people had done a below-average job on him, the webs being more like checks and no color match, whatsoever in the material. White gauze was used for the eye slits and that, at least, was ingenious. But the whole thing would have to be re-done. Thor, however, was much better but his helmet had been made out of an old coffee pot which was all they had on hand of that shape. A little metal work on the part of the local gang was necessary before our God of Thunder became fit to walk the streets of Los Angeles. His uru hammer and a blonde wig also had to be made or bought.

Within a few weeks though, all the costumes were complete except for Doctor Doom. Spidey had been re-made and Thor had hair and a hammer. Still the Dr. Doom suit was lacking a mask. Actually, we had four--none of them was satisfactory. Two made by professional mask makers were good, but one was much too big and the other was --believe it or don't--a very close duplicate of Ed Sullivan with metal all over his face. Another mask made of plastic wood, cardboard, and metallic paint by a local member was a bit too flimsy for practical use and a fourth was purchased for 29¢ at a local dime store when a plastic mask imitating Doctor Doom (unauthorized) was spotted in a Halloween display window. As it happened, Doom never did participate in the campaign and it's just as well for he would undoubtedly have tried to keep all the toys for himself.

Meanwhile, the big rally was shaping up and the time had come to open the campaign with champagne at the Press Party at the Brown Derby restaurant. Essentially, this was a reward for the citizens who have already helped and an opportunity for the Marines to meet with the reporters, present them with their official press kits and answer the initial questions about the campaign. It was also to be the first public appearance of our costumed heroes on that Wednesday evening as they marched into the Brown Derby's plush American Room (The size of it, Evanier noted, would have made it more appropriately called the Luxembourg Room!). If the thought of three men in superhero suits entering an elegant party crowded with reporters and Marines splendid in dress-blues sounds silly to you, you probably weren't there on that

CONTINUED...

Contrary to what the above photo would have you believe, the new Avengers line-up is not Thor, Jack Kirby, Captain America and Spider-Man. Actually, they are about to race to the food table at the TOYS FOR TOTS Press Party.

TOYS FOR TOTS (continued)

night, as were MARVELMANIA'S own Don Wallace, Jack Kirby, Mrs. Jack Kirby, Mark Evanier, and Steven and Gary Sherman. If you had been there, you'd know that the evening went off surprisingly well. The people at the party loved the heroes, referring to Captain America as "Captain Marvel", "Shield", or "Mr. America". Mostly older people, the crowd wasn't as enlightened on super-hero lore as they should have been, but over a dozen gentlemen recalled how they used to collect comics and two Marines remembered the work Cap had done in World War II, one of them with good enough a memory to ask a question about Baron Zemo. To say that a good time was had by all would be trite, but a fair summation, nevertheless.

Fun's over--Back to work!! The Santa Claus Lane Parade is approaching and we haven't yet decided what to do in it. The parade committee, it turns out later, wants just the super-heroes to ride in a car and to wave to the kids. So be it!! Meanwhile, the rally isn't too far off and as sponsor, it's time for MARVELMANIA to really knuckle down and get to work! Celebrities are invited to appear and, one by one, they accept: Arte Johnson and Ruth Buzzi from "laugh-In", George Kennedy, the Lone Ranger (You know how masked men have to stick together!), the Three Stooges, the Banana Splits, Lew Parker from "That Girl!", James Doohan from "Star Trek", (Leonard Nimoy had to cancel due to a prior committment), Edgar Buchanan, Frank Cady, and Alvie Moore from "Petticoat Junction" and "Green Acres", Marc Copage of "Julia", Lisa Gerritsen from "My World and Welcome to It!", Gale Gordon from "Here's Lucy!", Janos Prohaska, the famed stuntman and costume designer who plays Andy Williams' cookie-mooching bear, Steve and Barry Livingstone from "My Three Sons" and a very lengthy list of equally known celebrities which could well exhaust our typing crew.

All of a sudden, it became time to tape some T.V. commercials for the campaign and the rally. Los Angeles children's show host Baby Daphne had invited the super-heroes to appear on her popular television show...

The super-heroes stand before the television cameras waiting to tape the television commercials for TOYS FOR TOTS.

So, one Sunday morning, it came to be that the MARVELMANIA staff and some very sleepy-ish super-heroes crept into a soundstage at KHJ-TV to tape a few spots on her show and also the commercials which would be played extensively in the period between then and Christmas when the campaign ended.

The next few weeks were so hectic that words cannot fully describe how much the gang was running around. The super-heroes made a dozen other personal appearances while thw rest of the staff coordinated plans for the upcoming rally.

CONTINUED...

BE A SUPER-HERO!

In the foreground, Baby Daphne (Patricia Blake) reviews her lines as the cameramen prepare a trick shot by which the super-heroes will suddenly "appear" in the scene.

TOYS FOR TOTS RALLY (continued)

Finally, December sixth arrived and the Pan-Pacific was filled to over-flowing with an array of exhibits, shows, and people bringing donations for the campaign as admittance.

And since one picture may be equated to a thousand words we now present 5,000 words about this mammoth rally sponsored by MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL to aid needy children.

MARVELMANIA marches on...!

Scene from TOYS FOR TOTS T.V. commercial.

Spider-Man with Baby Daphne

Spider-Man greets Lew Parker who plays the irascible father on ABC-TV's "That Girl!"

Cap challenges Spidey to a model road race at Eldon toy exhibit. Needless to say, Captain America won. Notice the disappointed look on Spider-Man's face.

DEC. 6-7 **PAN PACIFIC AUDITORIUM**

Spider-Man and Captain America lead the crowd in Christmas carols on stage at the Pan-Pacific rally.

CLUB NEWS (continued)

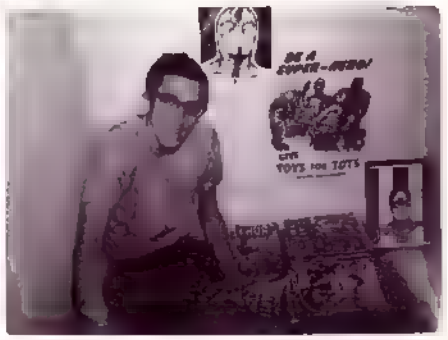
MARVELMANIAC OF THE MONTH

Each month, it is our intent to honor some MARVELMANIAC who has distinguished himself in some manner above and beyond the call of mere mortal Marvelmaniadom. Last issue, the Fickle Finger of Forbush pointed itself at Bill Harroff of Elkhart, Indiana and this time around, the phantastic phlange rockets to Berwyn, Illinois to immortalize one Gary Ricker of 1334 So. Wesley Ave. (Zip code: 60402 for you completists!) Gary has devised a method which is both ingenious and honorable to collect money for Operation: Breadbasket, a program to help feed the needy administered by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

When we first learned what Gary was up to, we were very impressed. He has turned his room into a "Comic Museum" and is charging a quarter donation which he matches quarter for quarter. The museum will display all the MARVELMANIA items as well as some sixty of the rarest Big Little Books and comic-related material such as Capt. Midnight mugs, shake-ups decoders, manuals. Also featured will be comic character pins, buttons, and toys. Photos of all this splendor will appear in a forthcoming issue.

Gary came into this world on November 28, 1950. After secondary education, he took a year at the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle Campus.

Failing German, ("I even had trouble reading Sgt. Fury" says Gary) he became an office clerk there and is now looking for employment, due to a clerical error in paperwork which prevented his readmission to the university. His interests are as follows: A certain blue eyed blonde who lives on the other side of town, motorcycle



GARY RICKER

riding, old comic book premium offers and toys, and the common contagion of MARVELMANIA!! We asked Gary how he came to be interested in the Operation Breadbasket project and quoth the Marvelmaniac:

"Despite my escaping into comics, some people in this country have neither the will nor the money to. Little kids who should be at play, sit despondent....not knowing when hunger shall cease. Young men and women sit in high school classrooms, knowing that a diploma from this school won't get them through college. An assembly-line worker puts in long hours of overtime because he realizes that half of the groceries his wife will purchase tomorrow will be rancid. They are of little faith. Poor people...But the words of Rev. Jesse L. Jackson hold the hope of the poor and I'm trying to be of some help!"

We are proud of the ingenuity being displayed by Mr. Ricker. He has devised a way which will yield happiness out of his comic book collection for many more than himself. The museum will be open shortly and we urge members in Gary Ricker's area to contact him about attending. It should be quite an accomplishment!

IN HERE, AND I SHALL GIVE YOU THE POWER OF ALWAYS WINNING WHEN YOU GAMBLE!
THIS IS LIKE TAKIN' CANDY FROM A BABY!
I MERELY ADJUST THESE DIALS...
I FEEL LIKE A CHARACTER IN A GRADE-B SCIENCE-FICTION MOVIE!

An unfortunate battle with the Space Phantom had turned the Hulk against the Avengers once more. A useless battle with their former teammate and the mighty Sub-Mariner followed and convinced the Avengers that the green-skinned behemoth could never be counted among their ranks. As the weary four-some made its way back to New York, the stage was being set for their meeting with ol' Captain America, perhaps the greatest force for justice the world had ever known.

The impression that the Avengers must have received on their initial encounter with this man of the past was that here was a strong man, but a man crippled by grief. For, while Captain America does not falter in proving his identity or describing the death of his partner, his demeanor makes it clear that he's a walking dead man caring little for the life that has been restored to him. Not until the Avengers become rendered helpless by an alien ally of the Sub-Mariner do we get a glimpse of the real Captain America. Flushed with the excitement of discovering new worlds full of new wonders and grasping on to the false realization that, through his newfound friend Rick Jones, Bucky can live again, he rescues the Avengers, who had been turned into stone by the alien's ray gun. Several months will pass before the Avengers themselves see this side of their newest member.

The Captain America we follow through an epic fight with the Hulk and an invasion of lava men is a strange crime-fighter. Most of his effort seems to be directed towards fighting memories of an unpleasant past. During these issues, he is seemingly fighting to keep fighting. He holds to his dream that Rick Jones can make him forget Bucky Barnes and begins to train him. And, during a moment of inaction in a cameo appearance in the Thor strip, Cap exclaims that "It's been a quiet few days--too quiet for Captain America!". Too quiet because, in the silence of inactivity, he can remember the explosion that claimed the life of his partner.

The first appearance of Zemo and his Masters of Evil begins a dynamic change in the star-spangled Avenger. Brought face-to-face with his past, Captain America does not turn away from it. His reaction

THE COMING OF THE AVENGERS

by Tony Isabella

PART 2

ENTER:

CAPTAIN AMERICA

THE AVENGERS (continued)

takes the form of revitalized spirit, driven by a hunger for revenge upon Bucky's murderer. The effects of the more forceful Captain America are immediately evident as he leads his new teammates to a smashing victory becomes meaningless. Zemo had escaped.

With this development, the desire for revenge grows into an obsession. We see him explode into rage as Rick Jones curiously tries on one of Bucky's old costumes. The memory of his partner's death feeds his hatred of Zemo until it consumes all reason. When the Executioner dangles the bait in front of the Captain, he leaps into the net. Nothing matters, save his revenge upon Zemo. And this symbol of another age becomes awesome in his burning quest. Alone, he destroys Zemo's kingdom and scatters his aborigine troops. His vengeance is almost complete when it is snatched from him by the last-second intervention of the immortal Executioner. This issue ends as Captain America roars a challenge to the empty skies; his fellow Avengers stand silently beside their newest member, perhaps a little shocked by his outburst of emotion and the intensity with which Cap is pursuing his revenge. Yet it shall be this blood feud that will form the crux of the Avengers strip for many future issues of the magazine until the conflict is finally resolved. It is for this reason that we have admittingly ignored Iron Man, Thor, Giant-Man and the Wasp, at least for this portion of our comprehensive study of the Avengers.

It soon becomes apparent that Zemo's two escapes have started to undermind Captain America's abilities. The former World War II hero is an ineffective leader as the Avengers first do battle with Kang the Conqueror under his chairmanship. During this battle, his commands are little more than warnings that are either unneeded or too late. Even in the actual combat, we see Cap overshadowed by all of his teammates, including Rick Jones and the Wasp. And, two following issues have episodes

which cause us to doubt that Cap's sanity is wholly intact.

Sanity in doubt? We get graphic proof just prior to the coming of Wonder Man. In a delusion, during an Avengers meeting, Cap sees Zemo as a figure of ultimate terror---monsterous in his size and his evil. The star-spangled Avenger seems to think of nothing but his revenge during this time, recklessly attacking the Executioner to get at Zemo, only to be caught unawares by the hooded villain's stun-gun. One wonders if Captain America thinks of the Avengers themselves as mere assistants to help him get to Zemo. During the course of the conflict, several of his statements may be interpreted this way. In all fairness, though, we must realize that it is only his tragic loss that has distorted the Captain's actions.

The height of Captain America's less-than-rational behavior, already exhibiting itself through delusions as fits of mania, is seen in the following issue. Paranoia has to be the verdict when Cap believes Immortus' fabrication that the Avengers assisted him in the capture of young Rick Jones. Only a truly disturbed mind could believe that his four best friends could turn against him. Later, this fit of paranoia is revealed as a camouflaged blessing. After three defeats, Immortus decides he can not risk a fourth and takes Captain America to the Tower of London, circa the 12th century, hoping to defeat an Avenger on these unfamiliar grounds. Zemo takes the opportunity to challenge the Avengers while they're minus an ally and he and the Executioner and the Enchantress quickly gain an advantage over these heart-sick heroes.

But when Captain America defeats an entire castle-full of the most heavily-armed warriors of the past through his superior knowledge of combat techniques, Immortus begins to endure second thoughts about joining the Masters of Evil. He returns Captain America and Rick Jones to their own time where the star-spangled one turns the tide of battle in favor of the Avengers. Only a last-second spell by the Enchantress, that sends all concerned back to a period just before she encountered Immortus, rescues the Evil Masters from a just defeat. Yet

CONTINUED...

THE AVENGERS (continued)

the battle has served to restore Captain America to his full fighting potential. He now realizes that he needs the Avengers, the only people who really understand his problem, more as friends than allies. He also realizes, as would any man who had just defeated an entire castle, that he is not useless, that he is every bit as skilled as he ever was, and that Zemo can not escape justice forever. Though he continues to take a backseat in battle because of the superior physical might of his companions, Captain America now becomes a powerful force to be reckoned with and plays prominent roles in many succeeding victories. Moreover he begins to involve himself in the problems of his fellow Avengers to a remarkable degree.

While Iron Man is missing, supposedly tracking down the "murderer" of Tony Stark, Captain America proposes that the Avengers suspend all activities for twenty-four hours in respect for the "late" Tony Stark. What greater sacrifice could such a man make? A man to whom inaction means the return of voices from past battles and that one final battle for his young partner? (Perhaps luckily, Cap's motion is withdrawn in favor of Giant Man's proposal to grant Iron Man a leave of absence until his mission is through.)

And when Giant-Man is captured by the newly-formed team of the Mole Man and the Red Ghost, Captain America fights fiercely to aid his fellow hero. The excitement of his battle is only slightly diminished by the fact that Iron Man and Thor carried the largest part of the struggle.

Yet when the world's mightiest crusaders are trapped in Count Nefaria's castle, it is Captain America who, singlehandedly fights the forces of the Maggia, not falling until the other Avengers are free to capture the evil Count. And when the Wasp falls victim to a stray bullet, Cap's concern is second only to Giant-Man's. Cap knows what the loss of a partner can do to a fighting man and he's also aware that the Wasp is much more than a partner to the grief-stricken Henry Pym. Is it any wonder that he fights what could be a losing battle versus the clock to aid the giant Avenger in a maddening hunt for the one man who can successfully perform the operation which will save the Wasp? Though Zemo is never mentioned during these fights, it is clear that Captain America is readier to settle his score with the master of evil than at any other time in his second life. That final clash is not long in coming.

Even as Captain America was controlling his desire for a just revenge, Zemo was letting a hatred of the Avengers grow unchecked until their destruction was foremost in his evil thoughts. Freeing the Black Knight and the Melter from imprisonment, he kidnapped Rick Jones to lure Captain America into a deadly trap. The long-running struggle between Cap and Zemo, the Avengers and the Masters of Evil was, at long last, coming to a head.

The Avengers lose no time in preparing a ship to carry them to Zemo's Amazon jungle kingdom. Yet one by one, the heroes are drawn off to defend themselves and New York from their foes until only Captain America remains to rescue Rick Jones. But he is no longer an enraged madman---he is Captain America at the height of his power and ability, thinking, always alert. He doesn't fall helplessly into the hands of Zemo's army. Instead, he separates Zemo from his army for a one-to-one showdown. Zemo's armed. Captain America only has his shield. Catching the reflection to blind him, Captain America charges forward. A panicky shot from the raygun and tons of rock tumble down to end the life of Zemo, even as the Avengers are defeating his allies in New York. Captain America now has the burden of revenge lifted off his tired shoulders.

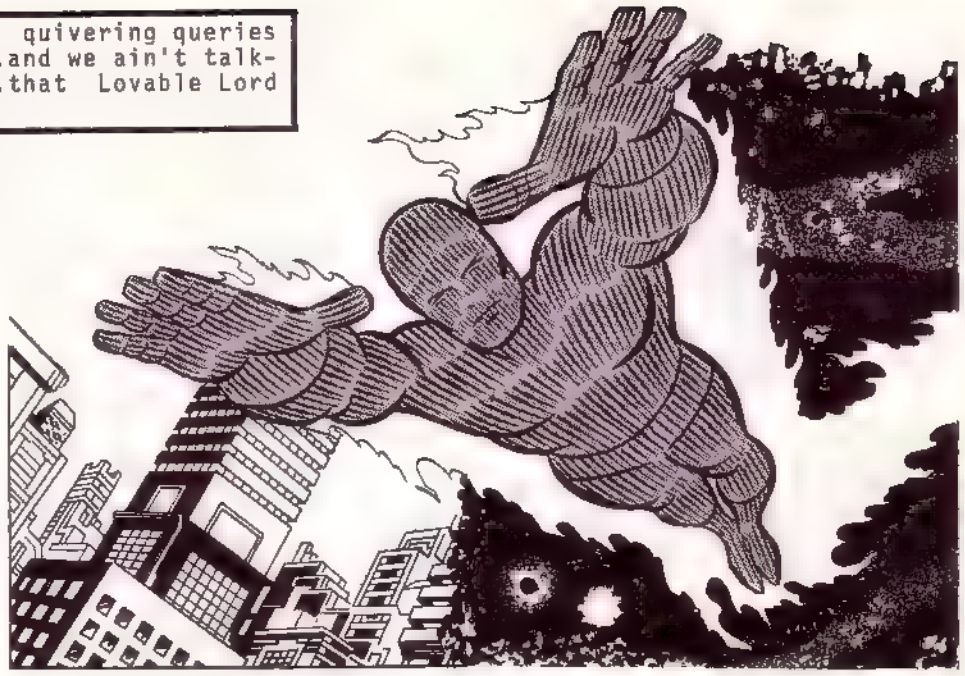
And now what, now that he can fully live his second life he has been granted? Can Rick Jones become his partner as Bucky was? At any rate, Cap now believes that the Avengers will be there to help him in his new life. When he returns to New York, though, he will find a completely different situation, one that will leave him more confused about his new life and his place in today's world than he had previously been.

With that somewhat calculated teaser, we end this second installment of our comprehensive survey of the Avengers. In future issues of Marvelmania Magazine, we will be discussing the changes brought about with the acceptance of Hawkeye, Quicksilver, and the Scarlet Witch as replacements for the charter members of the team; the effect that the return of Giant-Man as Goliath had on Cap'n America and company; and all the other developments in this series, right up to today's line-up and organization. (If we ever catch up with all the changes made in this mag since issue one!) And now, what you've all been waiting for...those three magic words...

TO BE CONTINUED!

DOOM'S DISPATCH

...And now, here to answer your quivering queries is everyone's favorite doctor...and we ain't talking about Marcus Welby, M.D....that Lovable Lord of Latveria...Victor Von Doom!



..As your superior, I am pleased no end that you have seen t proper to award me a column n this magazine in which to nswer your queries! Now--here did I put that question stack? Ah---Here it is under the latest issue of Jerry Lew- ahem!) Now, onward...

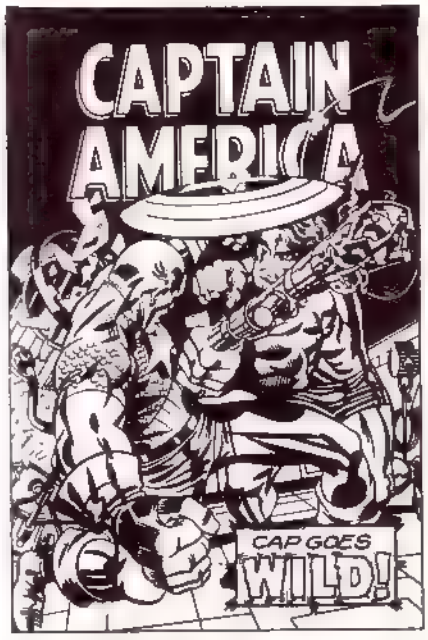
Q: How can the Torch breathe when the fire around him consumes oxygen?

--Dave Richter
Shreveport, La.

A: To answer this infantile question, I captured Jack Kirby (who has the great honor of reproducing my likeness for posterity in four-color publications known as comic books.) and mercilessly extracted from him the truth--that the Torch can breathe because in flaming form, he gets his oxygen supply the same way his fire does which is to merely extract it from the air through his pores so some of it is used to support his flame and some for respiration. In the future, David, I'll thank you to ask harder questions, more worthy of my attention!

Q: What cover of Captain America was the membership poster taken from?

--Ed Griffith
Alton, Ill.



A: I wouldn't know--I wasn't in it! [It was #106--Ed.]

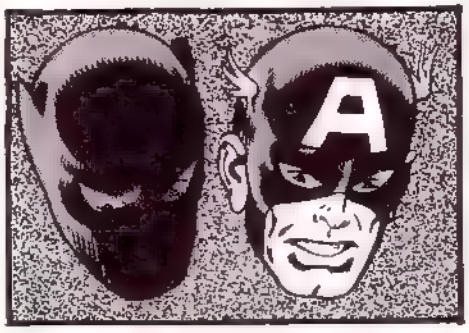
Q: In X-Men #48, at the end of the issue, next month's story was announced as "Metoxo, the Lava Man". This story never appeared. Why?

--Randy Pierce
Mobile, Ala.

A: With a name like that, you may consider yourself lucky it didn't!

Q: Why is it that the Captain America of 1970 does not remember his battle against the Black Panther, Yellowjacket, and the Vision in 1941? This battle took place in issue #71 of The Avengers.

--Harold Barr, Jr.
Street, Md.



A: Perhaps it was that that shield-wielding freak battled so many inconsequential villains that his fallible memory failed to recall such a trivial incident!

Q: Why wasn't your pic on the cover of the first issue?

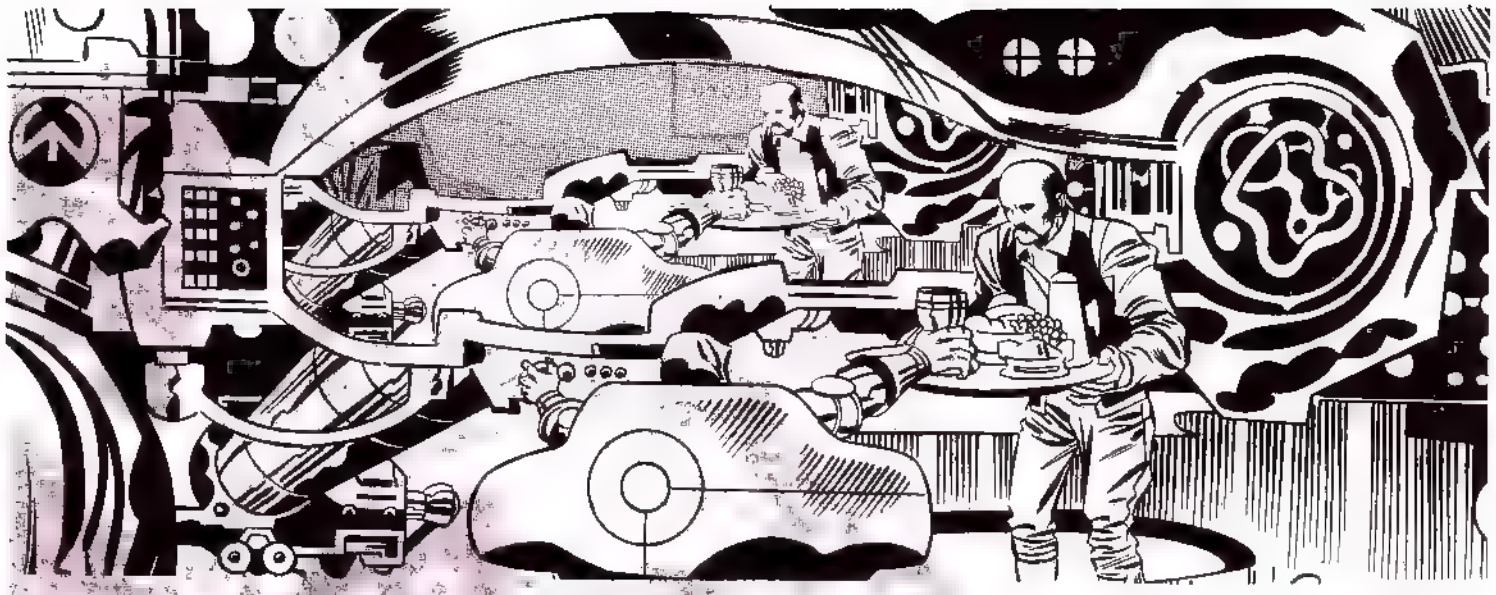
--Bob Margolis
Cincinnati, Ohio

A: Why wasn't yours?

Q: Since you once fought old Daredevil, perhaps you could tell me how his billy club retracts the rope into itself when the rope is wrapped about a pole or other object.

--Dennis Eggink
Ripon, Calif.

A: If you will look in that magenta maroon's 1967 annual, you shall learn about a button which is on his club. When he presses it, his infernal line is unleashed, free to fell a lowly street hoodlum. When he next presses the button, the end of the line forms itself into a hook which he may use to grapple a flagpole or protruding ledge. And the third press causes the hook to disappear, so that the cycle may be repeated. At least that question was more intelligent and worthy of my attention!



Doom's Dispatch (continued)

Q: Where is Latveria located in Europe?

--Jay Smith
Washington, D.C.

A: My kingdom is located in the deathless regions of the old country, just northeast of Transylvania! We have the most gracious honor of being the only nation on Earth with a zip code in Roman numerals!

Q: Do we members end up on someone's mailing list when we join MARVELMANIA?

--Brian Mahone
Salem, Ore.

A: You flatter yourself! Do you think for a moment that anyone would pay for such a motley membership roster? We would not lower ourselves to such a level!

Q: How did the Sandman get his amazing powers?

--Dennis Alexander
San Francisco, Calif

A: An escapee from a penal institution, that human pebble stumbled onto an atomic test site where a primitive nuclear explosion caught him and performed a molecular transformation, mutating and altering his very composition into the substance on which he was then standing--sand! He soon found that he was empowered with the ability to alter his density, not unlike that simple synthazoid, the Vision!

Q: Is there a possibility of Ghost Rider coming back?

--Bob Margolis
Cincinnati, Ohio

A: He doesn't have a ghost of a chance! (Let it never be a truth that a true monarch is lacking a sense of humor!)

Q: What makes Thor's hammer and Captain America's shield return to them so quickly?

--Tom Quattro
Rome, N.Y.

A: That long-haired half-wit's despicable hammer is enchanted you will recall, to return to the Thunder God. And the star-spangled stooge's shield works much like that juvenile amusement known as a "Frisbee", its spinning motion placing it into a circular trajectory!

Q: How do you shave?

--Dan McMahon
Chicago, Ill.

A: I must sadly tell you that the accident which disfigured my face also destroyed all the hair follicles which normally grow into a beard. I am, however, working on a serum which shall soon repair the damages so that I may walk proudly out among my subjects, devoid of this ghastly mask!

Q: Why haven't you gotten your own magazine yet?

--Gary Tripp
Torrance, Calif.

A: Are you insinuating, by no small chance, that I have been overlooked in the bestowing of magazines? If so, heed now my warning that follows....My own publication is coming and I do expect that you, Gary Tripp, shall purchase every copy in your neighborhood, or I shall move Torrance first on my conquest schedule! And I shall be sending millions of issues out your way!

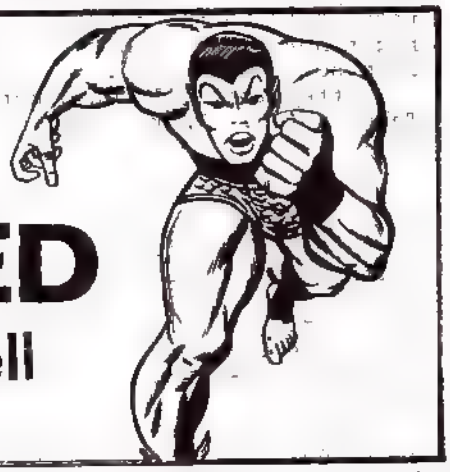
That's it! I can't stand it! You insolent insects annoy me with your accursed curiosities and drivelous meanderings! But listen and heed my words! You paltry beggars have one more chance! Sit by the fire, find some scrap of paper, take your piece of coal, and scratch out some questions which are both intelligible and coherent, and worthy of my precious time! My address is...

DOOM'S DISPATCH
Marvelmania Magazine
P.O.B. #718
Culver City, Ca. 90230

and they had better be good!!!

MARVEL REVISITED

by Tim Russell



One day, some years back, I was in a second-hand magazine shop buying nickel comics to satisfy my Archie appetite. I used to like those things a lot and I still pick one up on occasion to see if they might not have changed and they have not. On that particular day, I was purchasing a rather huge amount of those minor masterpieces--forty-seven to be totally accurate about it--and as they were six for a quarter, I realized that I could take one more for no charge whatsoever. I'd already picked the stacks clean of all the Archies I did not already own, and I hated to pass up anything "free", so I picked a super-hero comic at random to read and within two weeks, I was back at that shop trading two of my Archies for one super-hero comic.

The issue which aroused a passion within me for super-stuff was a Daredevil--number four as I recall--and I chose it solely because I liked the hero's name. In retrospect, that story with D.D. battling the Purple Man was one of the weakest stories in Marvel's history. But it was a change from Betty and Veronica and I went wild.

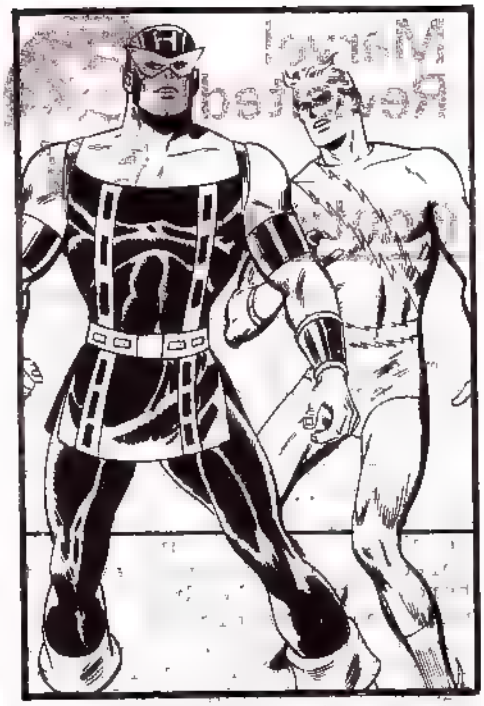
It wasn't long before all my Archies were gone and in their stead was my collection of super-hero adventures. It wasn't a large stack, but it was enough from which to cultivate a great knowledge of Marvel heroes. I was buying and trading for the Marvels I wanted, and one day I obtained a prize more precious to me than you could imagine--'Twas a copy of Fantastic Four #1! I'd obtained it by buying two hundred Marvels at two cents each from a schoolmate who'd gotten tired of them. They were purchased sight unseen and he gave them to me during Lunch at school and I only had time to stick them in my hall locker to make it to class on time. I lived in agony until after school to see what was in there and when I saw F.F.#1 I went wild. Two weeks later, I stopped being so happy when it and the rest of my comics went up in flames. It was a small fire, but the loss of my comics depressed me so that I gave them up and started collecting stamps.

A long time passed after I gave them up. After a while, I forgot about them altogether but I was soon reminded...

Over Christmas vacation, I took a bus trip with a group from my school. The bus was delayed for several hours and, bored unto death, I sought relief at the terminal newsstand by purchasing a stack of new Marvel comics and was shocked at how much they'd changed.

The Fantastic Four has become more complicated. There were no Inhumans when I last read the F.F. and Reed and Sue were unwed, although marriage seemed inevitable. The art seems infinitely better now as it is more crisp and much more dynamic. The stories seem a bit confusing--Maybe I'm just behind, but I liked it better when the F.F. was the entire show. Ben and Reed seem to be slowing down and Sue's pouting is worse than ever.

Spider-Man was my favorite when I quit and I don't quite know what to make of him now. The drawing seems better now, also and the dialogue is much more interesting...but it took me three readings to begin to accept the "new" Peter Parker. He was always such a shlumph--Believe me, if I had a girl with Gwen's looks, I wouldn't waste my evenings swinging over rooftops or even reading comics for that matter. Much more palatable now, though, is that Peter no longer undergoes a complete personality metamorphisis when he dons his gay Spidey-apparel. He used to be so clever as Spider-Man and so dull as Peter that it annoyed me.



The Avengers line-up has me completely baffled. The team has the strength and the dynamic appeal it lacked with the line-up of Cap, Quicksilver, Scarlet Witch, and Hawkeye who always looked like a very bad summer replacement. Hawkeye is now Goliath, I've gathered, and that seems like a smart move as his strongest virtue was personality and not powers. Yellowjacket doesn't seem to be much of anything in either department, but maybe I haven't read enough.

X-Men have changed more, perhaps, than any other comic. The last issue I remember was the origin of Professor X and I've just read of his resurrection from the dead which is no small difference. I didn't even know he'd been sick! Art by Adams is too full of angles for my taste and Buscema was a little sloppy. The X-Men have lost their individual personalities and also their own mag and I hope I didn't have anything to do with that!

I like what's happened to Thor. I liked him when I left as a strong super-hero feature and I like him now as a mythical type of hero. Norse gods are more interesting than common crooks!

Daredevil hasn't changed too much. Karen knows his secret identity, but that was bound to happen. I always liked Foggy who seems to have put on quite a bit of weight! Art is weird--I can't describe it but Colan works with larger figures and the effect is fine but hard to adjust to.

CONTINUED...

Marvel Revisited (continued)

Iron Man has changed even less. He was a good character then and he's a good one now. I'm glad he got his own comic. He never had room to perform before. No art comments.

Captain America deserved his own comic too, perhaps even moreso...But he's no longer the Cap I knew. What bugs me about Colan's drawings on Daredevil is even more evident here. The way he draws is too much photographic and not enough super-hero. I see Cap is still brooding over losing Bucky. I thought he'd have gotten over it by now, but he is still at it and he's also brooding over some lady now. I just don't see him as the hero he is supposed to be.

Sub-Mariner has come a way since I last saw him. He was more of a villain then and I think that fact made him much more unique. He doesn't have as much of that famous Namor arrogance. While Cap isn't enough like a super-hero, Sub-Mariner is too much like one. The drawing seems much more of a chore...more involved and I rather approve of this.

And lastly, the Hulk! He seems finally to have a steady artist and while I can think of others I'd rather see have the permanent assignment, this Herb Trimpe captures the Hulk spirit very well...Perhaps too well, as it seems to be invading some of his people, too.

I've heard a lot about the Silver Surfer. Never having read a copy, I can't comment yet. Some general comments---Stan Lee used to write all of the stories and this gave a sort of uniformity to the line which I liked. There is now more of a variance of styles, even between comics which Stan himself writes. I don't know whether I prefer this, but it will probably make reading the comics more interesting in the long run. Yes, I'm going back to collecting. I enjoyed my reunion with Marvel too much. I'm going to try and fill in all those issues I missed and this time, I'm getting a fireproof file cabinet to store my collection in! It's good to be back!

MORE ON REALISM IN COMICS

by John Ostapkovich

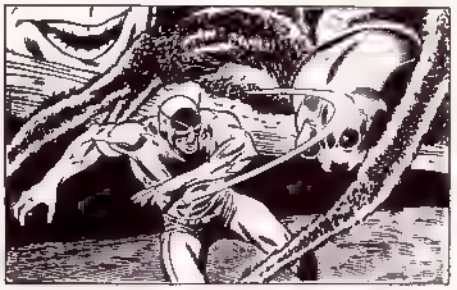
In issue number one of the MARVELMANIA MAGAZINE there appeared an article dealing with the subject of "Realism in the Comics". Some of the points were well-taken, but elsewhere the author ran into a bit of trouble and stumbled over his own subject.

Realism in comics is very relative, as is most anything. If you're the kind who would sit back with his comic book and scoff at the colorfully-garbed nuts who swing and fly and drive all over the planet simply because there are no such people in the real world, then you'd better stop reading right now. What I have to say does not concern you.

Attention, all you others! Take notes! There may be a quiz, later.

In order to appreciate the realism in the comic book, one must accept this basic truth : there are such things as their super-powered beings. When we expand upon this, one can see that some would use their own gain (the villains). There is a foundation---now we build up upon it.

Because men are reasonably emotional beings, and these emotions have been shown to be about as close to constant as any sociological factor can be our hyper-men will react essentially the same as the norm



unless the accident by which they were then elevated above the masses also affected their brains. In this event, they would become divorced from humanity, very much like Hulk, who is a primary example of this.

The Fantastic Four is (or are) a better example. They are, for all intents and purposes, a professional superteam. Their entire lives are dedicated to the downfall of evil and, while they are superior to the throngs of Homo Sapiens, they are yet one with the race. Reed Richards has the force and ambition used to drive the group while his wife remains vain in her womanly way. The Thing, the better of any mortal in sheer physical strength, is not too loaded in the brains department. And Johnny, the Human Torch?--He's swaggering, over-confident and insecure.

The aforementioned article at one point recounted how it would be very boring to follow Sue Richards on a twenty page shopping trip. I agree, but who has said that the factual, the realistic has to be as the commonplace? The television series, The F.B.I., is based all upon actual, true-to-life cases but I never considered it a dull show.

Realism is basic to any story, especially those of the comic book to prevent the plot from seeming at all contrived. It adds to the atmosphere of a masterpiece; a down-to-earther into a man-sized portion of reading pleasure.

Without it, all you have is a comic book.

(Up, Up, and Away!)

GRAPHIC TRAFFIC

by Mark Evanier

The story you are about to read has been told before in fanzines but is, I feel, worth repetition. It begins with me modestly telling you that I'm the guy who, a few years ago, thought up the idea of those M.M.M.S. ranks...Hopefully not my ultimate contribution to humanity, but certainly significant enough to make the Bullpen Bulletin page and get myself a lot of mail from kids giving me their suggestions about M.M.M.S. ranks. (As if I could do anything with them---I hate to think how many suggestions Marvel must have gotten!) Some of the ranks suggested to me were just plain silly while the rest were simply moronic. I think the most asinine one was S.S.S. (Stands for Secondary Silver Surfer and in order to get the title you have to go down to a newsstand and tear up twenty D.C. comics--Hardly the kind of behavior the M.M.M.S. sought to promote!)

Well, as I said, the mail was pretty much on the moronic side....But there was one letter from a Marvel fan back in the East who suggested no rank titles--He just wanted to chat and chat we did. His name was Carl Koegel and I recall from his first letter that he was a Wally Wood fan and a devoted follower of the X-Men. I had never met him, of course, but we became good friends and we exchanged letters at a rate which kept our mailmen spinning. Then, one day, it occured to me that I was writing but getting no replies. Carl was something like three letters behind and, since we were currently debating who was the best inker for Jack Kirby, it seemed odd that Carl should up and forsake so lively a topic. At first I told myself that he had perhaps lost interest or fallen behind in his school work...I think I hypothesized every feasible reason and even a few which put my imagination to working overtime. But I didn't even begin to imagine a reason as outlandish as what I soon found myself thinking.

Two months and about nine letters had yielded no results and I was worried. So I got out our phone book, looked up Carl's town in the long distance rates and decided it was worth a call to satisfy my wonderings. I carefully dialed the number and Carl's father answered. It seems Carl had moved out a few months ago to an apartment on the opposite side of town, so as to be closer to his college. They were forwarding his mail to him and Carl's father was surprised that Carl hadn't written me lately. On the few occasions that they had seen him lately, he said, he spoke of me quite a bit as having been a great deal of help to him. I didn't quite understand that comment but with the message units piling up, I couldn't afford any explanation. I got Carl's new number and called him.

There was no answer there, so I called back an hour later and got Carl on the line and at once I was convinced that I'd somehow dialed the area code to the Twilight Zone. He said he was glad to hear from me and he asked why I hadn't written in months. I told him I had written in months...nine times, in fact--and he ignored what I said and went on to say that if I didn't think that Frank Giacoia was the absolute best inker for Jack Kirby's pencils, I should take a look at the cover to Fantasy Masterpieces #6. I was willing to pay to keep this conversation going but Carl apparently wasn't. He made me promise to write--which I did without any argument--and we parted.

Even as I was hanging up, though, I knew that something was wrong....Very wrong! Mind you, I had never spoken to him before and his tone of voice seemed natural...but something was wrong. First of all, he pretended that he hadn't received any of my letters and I knew that was impossible... And he had always, in his past letters, been a strong opponent of Frank Giacoia inking Jack Kirby. I had been the one who liked Giacoia and Carl had always been telling me how Vince Colletta was the best. I tried to forget about it, but I couldn't. My normally-overactive imagination was now working triple-speed and I had to resolve the matter at once or not get any sleep for the next week. I dug down into my box of unanswered mail and all that kind of stuff, looking for a piece of fluorescent red stationery which I remembered. On it was the address and the phone number of Sherri Clinton and once I found it, I went back to the phone to run our bill up some more.

"Hello?" responded a female voice on the other end.

"Hello--", said I, "May I speak to Sherri Clinton?"

"Speaking! Who is this?"

"This is Mark Evanier in Los Angeles, Sherri...Remember you wrote to me some time ago? I'm Carl's friend!"

"Oh, yes...Hello, Mark! Is that how you pronounce your last name? Carl always pronounced it 'E-von-yay'!"

"Nope--It's Eh-vuh-near", I said breaking it down into

CONTINUED...

GRAPHIC TRAFFIC (continued)

syllables and trying to add in the diacritical markings with voice inflections. "I called to see what you can tell me about Carl--I haven't heard too much from his lately!"

"I wish I could help you, Mark, but I haven't heard much from him either. He hasn't attended classes in weeks and he seems to always be busy whenever I call...usually writing you a letter--That's his excuse. I was thinking of writing to you to find out how he is!"

"The first time I've heard from him in months was ten minutes ago on the phone! I got the feeling something's going on with Carl and I'd like to help!"

Sherri went on: "The last time I saw him in person was a cram session for our Anthropology mid-term. Carl hasn't been coming to classes at all, hardly, so he really needed to come to that review meeting. I said hello to him and hinted that I'd like to go to a movie on the weekend and Carl just sort of ignored me! Then, his creepy roommate came up and led Carl away saying that they had to go somewhere!"

"Creepy roommate?", I asked, sensing a clue.

"Yeah...I don't know his name but he's got this thick German accent. Carl says he's an exchange student, but he's awfully old for that! He moved in the first day Carl got his new apartment and the two of them haven't been apart for ten minutes since!"

"Go on...!"

"There isn't much else to go on about. I went over to Carl's place one day saying I wanted to borrow his English book. The roommate answered the door and wouldn't let me in. When I asked to see Carl, he said Carl wasn't there, so I asked for the book and he said Carl had sold it...which doesn't sound like Carl. He'd rather give up an arm than his English book. Old Creepy then slammed the door on me and began whistling this weird tune. It kept running through me all night. My music teacher said that it was Chopin's funeral march. Hey--Isn't this call costing you a lot of money?"

"That's okay," I said, "If they take out my telephone, I can always rely on a Dixie Cup and a string!"

She ignored my snappy comment and went on..."I waited around for Carl outside the building, in front of the only door but he never went in. An hour later, I caught a glimpse of him in his window. I think he was there all along!"

We hung up and I sat down to ponder the evidence. Had I been Charlie Chan or, at least the Thin Man, I might have realized what was going on, much sooner. As it was, it took me the better part of an hour and it might have been longer if I hadn't paused to look at that Fantasy Masterpieces that Carl had mentioned. That was the key, it dawned upon me--That was part of a secret message which only another comic book fan like me would understand!

Carl was trying to tell me he was being held as a prisoner of the Red Skull! He was a prisoner in his own apartment, not permitted to even talk to anyone to whom he might tip off his predicament! That would explain, completely, all of his mystery and cryptic statements.

A few seconds later, I realized what a stupid thought that was and tried to put it out of my mind entirely. But even the more rational side of me had to admit that that is what all the evidence pointed to.

That FM reprinted the very first Skull story from Captain America number seven, a product of the team of Simon and Kirby with the help of writer France Herron. This issue introduced the Skull, a fictional character who was at first a super-saboteur, and later a sort of Super-Nazi...A perfect antagonist for Captain America and Bucky who were, in effect, a super-soldier team.

Carl's roommate had been whistling Chopin's funereal as Sherri encountered him, just as the Skull had whistled that very tune every time he did in some American technologist or scientist in that first story. That and the German accent had me convinced I was on the correct track for quite some time until I tried to explain it to a friend and began to realize the true absurdity of it all. It was then that an alternate theory occurred to me.

After World War II, the papers were filled with accounts of how deranged men believed that they were Hitler and committed atrocities and arrogant acts. It didn't seem impossible to me that some insane man could believe that he was the Red Skull and chanced upon Carl and his comic book collection and moved in at gun point. Possible, I admitted, but not probable. I needed a lot more proof before I could go to the police or anything.

I called Carl again. This time, the roommate answered. His accent was so thick that if he had been on "Hogan's Heroes", I would have laughed myself silly. I asked for Carl and he gave him the phone, adding, "Be quick about it!"

"Carl--", I said, "This is Mark Evanier again. I think I know what's going on and I can help you if you'll just confirm a few of my suspicions! Now, I know you're not free to talk, so just pretend this is an average phone call and answer yes or no to my questions now, okay?"

"Sure, Mark--Good to hear from you again!"

"All right--Now, are you being held prisoner in your apartment?"

"That's right!", he said, as casually as if I'd asked if he was still going to college. Only by answering my questions as if they were on some other topic would his captor permit him to speak to me.

"Now, I'm getting somewhere!", I said and I was. By establishing that he was in trouble, I wouldn't feel quite so foolish when I asked the next question..."Is it the Red Skull holding you prisoner?"

He paused for a second, as if trying to think of a way to phrase his answer so that his captor wouldn't suspect what I was asking him. "Right again, Mark!", he said, when suddenly a German accent from the background told him to hurry this call up. Carl added: "I'm very busy with schoolwork and my

CONTINUED...

GRAPHIC TRAFFIC (continued)

studies!"

I could sense that he was relieved that I had figured out the mess he was in. I put my next question--Did this guy have a gun?--to Carl just as I heard a click which signified that the Skull had picked up the extension and was listening in. I changed the topic. "Say, Carl--You know that big bookcase I keep my comics in?"

"Yeah, what about it?"

"It fell down--Took half the wall with it!" Just then, the extension was hung up, the Skull apparently having been satisfied with the innocence of the call. I asked Carl about the gun again and he signified that his captor did indeed have a gun. I asked Carl if he wanted me to call the police, but, before he could answer, the Skull ordered him to terminate the call, his voice raging. Carl thanked me for calling and I hung up. It was all clear now and I sat, for how long I do not know, pondering the case and trying to figure out a believable way to report this to the authorities.

I thought of leaving out the part about the Skull, completely--But I decided the police might need that information in order to rescue Carl. Finally, I decided that I had to choose some course of action. But before I could, the phone rang. It was Sherri.

"Carl just called me", she began. "--And he asked me to tell you not to do anything on your project until Wednesday. He said it was very important that I tell you. Does any of that make sense to you?"

It did. Carl didn't want me to call the police until Wednesday, for some reason. I decided to keep the truth from Sherri and I made up some lie. Then we hung up and I sat back to wait for Wednesday to come. The five days until that day would seem like weeks. I had nightmares of Carl living in the fearsome shadow of that madman, but I had to do as he asked and not call the police. What was to happen would prove to be more unbelievable than all that had gone before.

Two days later, a letter arrived from Carl.

CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE!

MARVEL NEWS

Conan is coming! The star of some of the most staggering sword and sorcery novels ever to grace a paperback book rack will be making his comic book debut in a few months in his own bi-monthly magazine. This masterpiece of mystic mastery comes to you through the courtesy of Roy Thomas, writer... Barry Smith, penciller...and Sam Grainger, inker. If that doesn't brighten up your day, nothing will!

By now, you probably know all about the two new comics from Marvel. Astonishing Tales and Amazing Adventures are their names and they feature a host of your favorite characters...The Inhumans, Ka-Zar, Dr Doom, and the Black Widow...So there's really no sense in our including that information in our Marvel News section.

RE-ENTER CHIC STONE

Since you're all quite familiar with the work of one of Marvel's most talented inkers of the past, we don't have to tell you anything about him except that he's back, Marvel has him, and he'll be inking Silver Surfer and the Inhumans for a start!

JIM STERANKO DEPT.

What's he up to, lately?

Aside from drawing just about the glitziest romance tale ever in Our Love Story #15, (On sale now--Form a double-line at the nearest newsstand) working on an upcoming strip for Esquire magazine, doing a few children's books, drawing an illustrated novel of his own character, Talon; preparing the first book from his newly-formed publishing company, and getting at least an hour of sleep each night, Jim is hard at work painting the covers for a veritable swarm of paperback books. Following is a list of what he has done to date...

Lancer Books:
- The Mighty Barbarians
- Prisoners of the Sky
- Infinity: One
- Master of the Dark Gate
- Return From the Stars
- Iceworld
- Kelwin the Broon

Berkley-Medallion Books:
- Warlocks and Warriors
- The Bar Staffel [G-8]
- The Purple Aces [G-8]
- Ace of the White Death [G-8]
- The Midnight Eagle [G-8]
- A Stranger Named O'Shea

PHOTO CREDITS

Photos on pages 2, 12, and 16 by Steve Sherman. Photos on pages 8, 17, and 18 by Donald Wallace. Photo on page 14 by U.S. Marine Corps.

COMING SOON!

Upcoming features in this magazine include...

AN INTERVIEW WITH JIM STERANKO

MARVELMANIA AROUND THE WORLD!

THE ORIGINAL FALCON!

THE FURTHER INTREPID, EXCITING AND DOWNRIGHT UNBELIEVABLE ADVENTURES OF OSGOOD AND ZELDA!!

AND LOTS OF OTHER GOODIES! (But, if you've got a subscription, you don't have to worry about missing out on any of this splendor!)

STERANKO
NICK FURY
AGENT OF
SHIELD